THE SUBMILLIMETER-WAVE SPECTRUM OF ISOTOPIC METHYL CYANIDE¹

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ABSTRACT

The laboratory submillimeter-wave rotational spectrum of the ¹³CH₃CN, CH₃¹³CN, and the CH₃C¹⁵N isotopomers of methyl cyanide has been observed in natural abundance in the 294 to 607 GHz region. The maximum J and K values are 34 and 14, respectively. Fifteen additional CH₃CN transitions up to K=21 were also measured. The transitions of all four species are fitted to a symmetric top Hamiltonian and the rotation and distortion constants are determined. The ¹⁴N quadrupole and spin rotation coupling constants are also calculated and presented. Suggested values for many other parameters which could not be directly determined from the isotope spectra are calculated from the normal species values and isotope relationships. The determined and calculated constants should predict the spectrum of the three isotopomers to well over 1THz accurately enough for astronomical assignments.

Subject headings: interstellar: molecules - laboratory spectra - line identification - molecular processes

1. INTRODUCTION

Methyl cyanide of acetonitrile is a well known interstellar molecule with densities in some sources exceeding 1 x106 cm⁻³ (Sutton et al. 1986). The normal species was first detected in the interstellar medium by Solomon, Jefferts, Panzias, & Wilson (1971). Since that time rotational transitions of the two singly substituted ¹³C isotopes (Cummins et al. 1983 and Sutton et al. 1985), the 365.01S965(12) cm⁻¹ (Koivusaari, Horneman, & Anttila 1992) v₈=1 bending state of CH₃CN (Goldsmith et al. 1983), and the CH₂DCN species (Gerin et al. 1992) have been observed. Methyl cyanide has been detected in nearby galaxies (Mauersberger et al. 1991) and used to make maps of star forming regions (e.g. Habling & Macdonald 1991 and Olmi, Cesaroni, & Walmsley1993). Rotational temperatures of over 200 Kelvin (e.g. Sutton et al. 1986) have been reported in some hot cores, At such high temperatures, CH₃CN significantly populates states which have transitions far into the submillimeter region. The rapid development of very sensitive receivers working far into the submillimeter and their use in surveys of hot sources has provided an urgent need to extend the range of quantum numbers where species known to exist in these sources can be accurately predicted.

Methyl cyanide is a textbook example of a prolate symmetric top featuring a large dipole moment, $\mu_0 = 3.92197$ (13) Debye (Gadhi et al. 1995) and $\mu_0 = 3.9256(7)$ for CH₃C¹⁵N (Mite, Sakai, & Katayama 1984). Since it is a symmetric top (C_{3v} symmetry), it features closely spaced transitions at very different energies in two distinct non-interacting symmetries A and E with K=3n and K≠3n(n=0, 1,2,3...), respectively. The high abundance of CH₃CN and its symmetric top spectral pattern makes it an excellent probe of temperature and excitation in a number of regions (e.g. Cummins et al. 1983, Loren & Mundy 1984, Sutton et at. 1986, and Bishop 1990.). The relative abundance of the A and E symmetries has also been a subject of interest (e.g. Sutton et al. 1986). The transitions of the CH₃I³CN species close I y track the normal species with the K=O transitions in the submillimeter typically appearing near the K=6 normal species transition.

The 1T113~N and the CH₃Cl 'N species have transitions appearing in the same spectral regions but arc well separated from the normal species due their smaller B rotational constants.

Methyl cyanide was one of the first molecules studied with microwave spectroscopy (Ring et al. 1947). A thorough summery of investigations before 1980 was published by Boucher et al. (1980). Between 1980 and now the normal species measurements were extended well into the submillimeter with a variety of techniques (Bocquet et al. 1988, Pavone et al. 1990, Carlotti, Dillonardo, & Fusina 1988, and Brown, Dangoisse, & Demaison 1988). With the exception of some Russian work without published transition frequencies, CH₂DCN was the only isotope to be studied in the submillimeter region (Le Guennec et al. 1992) and subsequently observed (Gerin et al. 1992). in this paper, we report submillimeter measurements of the ¹³CH₃CN, CH₃¹³CN and 013~1 'N isotopomers, in addition to the isotopic species we report a thorough analysis of the normal species including a few new high K transitions. The higher order 013C~N parameters are used in conjunction with isotope relations to derive a suggested set of higher order constants for the isotopic species. Predictions through J=99 for methyl cyanide and its jsotopomers are too lengthy to publish here, but they are available on-line from the JPL spectral line catalog at spec.jpl.nasa. gov or by anonymous ftp at the same site.

2. EXPERIMENTAL.

The sample of CH₃CN was obtained commercially from Matheson, Coleman, and Bell and required no further purification. Measurements were made with tone burst modulation on 100 GHz phase locked klystrons driving point contact harmonic generators. Second derivative detection using a 4.2 K lnSb hot electron bolometer was employed. The data were digitized directly by a computer for further analysis. Measurements were made at room temperature in a double pass polarization rotating one meter cell. The details of this

spectrometer's ystem arc described elsewhere (Friedlet al. 1995). All measurements were made in natural isotopic abundance at pressures of 1-10 mill itorr. Higher pressures resulted in excessive pressure broadening due to the large dipole moment. Measurement accuracy is estimated to be 30 kHz for the strongest low K transitions up to 150 kHz for the weakest transitions.

Initial predictions for the three isotopic species were based on an analysis of the da(a in Boucher et al. (1980). These predictions facilitated rapid assignment the observed spectra in the 290 to 442 GHz region. The 606 GHz transitions were predicted with the aid of the newly measured transitions anti were once again readily assignable. Initial normal species predictions were the result of an analysis of the existing data discussed in the following section. As expected, only small deviations within the predicted 1 σ uncertainty from the initial line positions were observed at the highest K values.

3. ANALYSIS

The CH₃CN analysis used the data in Boucher et al. (980), Pavone et al. (990), Bocquet et al. (1988), Kukolich et al. (1978), and Kukolich (1982) along with the 15 newly measured transitions reported in Table 1. The lower resolution measurements from a variety of sources were not included in the analysis. The transitions reported in Kukolich et al. (1978, 1981) with resolved hydrogen hyperfine were averaged according to relative intensities into ¹⁴N quadrupole hyperfine components, The ¹³CH₃CN analysis used transitions reported in Boucher et al. (1980) and the 55 new measurements reported in Table 2, The J=1←0 transition was measured at the University of British Columbia with a Fourier transform microwave spectrometer described in (Xu, Jäger, & Gerry 1992)

The, CH₃¹³CNanal ysis used the transitions reported in Boucher et al. (1980), Kukolich et al. (1978, 1982) and the 39 new measurements reported in Table 3. The measurements of Kukolich et al. (1978, 1981) appear to be slightly less precise than in the normal species due to the additional complication of the 13 C spin. The $J=1 \leftarrow 0$ transition

was re-measured at the University of British Columbia and was in excellent agreement with the Kukolich et al. (1978) measurements used in the analysis. The CH₃C¹⁵Nanalysis used transitions reported in Boucher et al. (1980) and the 37 newly measured transitions in Table 4. The $J=1\leftarrow0$ transition was measured at the University of British Columbia. In addition to the transitions, Tables 1 through 4 include, the fitted observed minus calculated, the lower state energy in wavenumbers, and the log base 10 of the line intensity at 300 K, 1_{300} , in units of nm²·MHz. The line intensity at temperature '1' is given by

$$+(1) = (8\pi^{3} + 3hc)v_{ba} + s_{aa}/[[e^{-EE}/k] - c^{-E/k]}/Q_{rs},$$

Where v_{ab} , ${}^xS_{ab}$, μ_x , E', and Q_{rs} are the transition frequency, line strength including the 2:1 A to E statistics, the dipole component along the x axis, lower and upper state energies, and the rotation-spin partion function. For brevity, the line intensities given are a sum of all K parity transitions and the major hyperfine components unless resolved. The partition functions Q_{rs} are given explicitly for each isotopomer. ~'here are additional low J transitions for all the isotopomers reported in the literature; however, they were found to be of lower resolution and contained no new information.

The analysis included the effects of ¹⁴N quadrupole and the spin rotation coupling where resolved, but none. of these effects were observed in the submillimeter region. The CH₃CN lines did appear to broaden somewhat at K near J but no splittings could be resolved. The normal species ground state rotation and distortion constants determined were B, D_J, D_{JK}, H_J, H_{JK}, H_{KJ}, L_{JK}, L_{JK}, and L_{JKK}. The rotation and distortion constants determined for the three isotopic species were B, D_J, D_{JK}, 1 I_{JK}, and H_{KJ}. The rotation and distortion constants along with the ¹⁴N quadrupole ant] spin rotation constants derived from the fit arc given on Table 5, Additional constants were fixed to the normal species values and are discussed in the following section.

4. DISCUSSION

The rotational constants A, D_K and H_K cannot be determined from the existing microwave spectra and in general cannot be determined from microwave spectra in $C_{3\nu}$ molecules without the aid of a suitable resonance; however, these values are needed to calculate relative intensities and rotational energies. As a result, it is necessary to use the A, D_K anti H_K values determined from the infrared spectroscopy of the ν_8 , $\nu_7+\nu_8$, and $\nu_7+\nu_8-\nu_8$ bands (Anttila et al. 1993). The A values given in Table 5 for the isotopic species were calculated by scaling the measured normal species A value by the ratio of A_n/A_i (n=normal, i=isotopomer) obtained from the ground state average (r_Z) structure which accounted for isotope effects on bond lengths determined by Demaison et al. (1979). The measured D_K constants for the normal species were scaled by the ratio of the A's squared. The H_K constants were not scaled since the scaling is small compared to the uncertainty in this parameter.

in order to generate accurate predictions to over a THz, the H_J values for ¹³CH₃CN and CH₃C¹ 'N were calculated by scaling the normal species value by the ratio of the D_J constants to the 3/2 power. The CH₃¹³CNH_J value was fixed to the ground state since the D_J's were approximately equal. The values of the L_{JJK}, L_{JK}, and L_{JKK} constants are determined for the normal species, but only L_{JJK} has a significant effect on the fit. These constants were included to give a more realistic prediction of the transition frequency uncertianty in the normal species and the transition frequencies in the isotopomers at higher J and K values. Since the values of these, parameters are not particularly well determined, the, isotopic species 1, constants were fixed to the normal species values.

The uncertainty in the $C_{\parallel}-C_{\perp}$ spin rotation parameter in CH₃CN was greatly affected by the uncertainty assigned to the lowest J transitions; however, the value was relatively independent of the uncertainties used. In the all the weighting schemes tried, the value varied at most 25% of its quoted uncertainty. The $C_{\parallel}-C_{\perp}$ spin rotation parameter could not be determined in either of the two ¹³C isotopomers and was fixed to the main

isotope, The 14 N quadrupole was well determined for all three isotopomers containing 14 N. The C_{\parallel} parameter was determined for the main isotope and the two 13 C isotopes. The values of the constants determined should predict the spectrum of 13 CH₃CN, CH₃I³CN, and CH₃CI⁵N to well over 1 THz with the accuracy required to assign interstellar spectra.

Acknowledgment

11. S. P. M. thanks the National Research Council for a NRC-NASA Resident Research Associateship. We also thank Bethany Gatchouse and Dr. Thomas Brupbacher at the University of British Columbia for making their measurements of the J=1 <--0 transitions available.

TABLE 1
Newly Measured CH₃CN Transitions

	- · · · · · - j - · · · · · · · ·				
Transition	Frequency Und	certainty	y Residu	al Intensit	y ^a Energyb
J" K" J' K'	(MHz)	(kHz)	(kHz)	$\log(l_{300})$	cm ⁻¹
22 12 21 12	403477.022	35	3	-2.92	854.616
22 13 21 13	403284.991	35	-3	-3.51	9"/7.988
22 14 21. 14	403077.969	35	8	-3.84	1111.101
22 15 2115	40'2856.002	35	-3	-3.87	1253.927
2'2 16 21. 16	402619.201	50	-6	-4.54	1406.433
22 17 21 17	402367.656	60	-O	-4.95	1568.588
22 18 21. 18	402101.450	60	4	-5.09	1740.356
22 19 21 19	401820.705	80	31	-5.89	1921.702
22 20 21	20 401525.450	100	10	-6.45	2112.587
22 21 21 21	401215.800	150	-48	-6.86	2312.973
33 11 32	11 605186.502	90	16	-2.74	922.741
33 12 32 12	604922.882	90	-5	-2.68	1036.266
33 13 32 13	604636.828	120	6	-3.25	1159.552
33 14 32 14	604328.356	150	-45	-3.54	1.292.573
33 1.5 3215	603997.668	150	74	-3.55	1435.'298

a Sec text, The partition function to J=99 including the ν_8 =1 state and the

 $^{^{14}}N$ quadrupole multiplicity is Q_{rs} =41077.6558.

b '1'eta] energy of the lower state.

TABLE 2

Newly Measured 13CH₃CN Transitions

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TABLE 2 Continued

Newly Measured ¹³CH₃CNTransitions

Transition J" K" F" J' K' F'	Frequency Uncertainty Resid (MHz) (kHz) (kHz)	
34 2 33 2 34 3 33 3 34 4 33 4 34 5 33 5 34 6 33 6 34 7 33 7 34 8 33 8 34 9 33 9	606849.895 60 1 606793.414 60 -20 606714.442 70 20 606612.910 70 17 606488.915 70 25 606342.453 90 -13 606173.716 1.50 32 605982.507 150 -109	-1.37 354.062 -1.13 378.904 -1.50 413.675 -1.60 458.367 -1.42 512.969 -1.86 577.470 -2.02 651.854 -1.90 736.105

a Sec text. The partition function to J=99 including the ¹⁴N quadrupole multiplicity is $Q_{rs}=3$ 1255.7298.

Note: F quantum numbers given only if resolved.

b Total energy of the lower state.

TABLE 3
Newly Measured CH₃¹³CNTransitions

	Newly Measured			
Transition	Frequency Ur	certainty Residu	ial Intensity	^a Energy ^b
J'' K" J' K'	(MHz)	(kHz) (kHz)	$\log(I_{300})$	cm ⁻¹
· 11 · 11	(**=****)	()	2(-,100)	
16 0 1 5 0	294156.780	3011	-1.72	73.598
16 1 15 1	294151.143	30 - 11	-1.73	78.564
	294131.143	30 - 15	-1.73 -1."17	93.458
16 3 15 3	294106.059		-1.53	118.279
18 0 1 7 0	330907.731		-1.61	93.835
18 1 1.7 1	330901.388	35 - 10	-1.62	98.800
1 8 2 1 7 2	330882.395	35 5	-1.66	113.694
18 3 17 3	330850.714	30 -6	-1.42	138.512
1 8 4 1 7 4	330806.400	40 1	-1.80	173.250
1 8 5 1 7 5	330749.431	40 - 1.6	-1.91	217.900
1 8 6 1 7 6	330679.886	40 1	-1.73	272.45]
18 8 17 8	330503.047	408	-2.37	411.204
1 8 9 1 7 9	330395.866	40 1.0	-2.2"/	495.376
18 10 17 10	330276.191	50 - 1	-2.81	589.385
1811 17 11	330144.109	60 0	-3.0-1	693.210
18 12 17 12	329999.670	70 11	-3.05	806.828
2 4 0 2 3 0	441118.129	45 - 0	-14(1	169.254
24 1 2 3 1	441109.700	45 - 5	-1.41	174.218
2 4 2 2 3 2	441084.413	45 -22	-1.46	189.107
2 4 3 2 3 3	441042.329	45 1	-1.20	213.918
2 4 4 2 3 4 24 5 2 3 5	440983.392	45 -1 5	1.58	248.646
24 5 2 3 5	440907.691	45 0	-1.68	293.2,82
24 6 2 3 6	440815.209	50 -3	-1.50	34"/.81"/
24 7 2 3 7	440706.000	60 - 7	-1.94	412.238
24 8 2 3 8	440580.131	60 0	-2.11	486.533-
24 9 2 3 9	440437.610	60 7	-2.00	570.677
24 1.0 23 10	440278.534	80 21	-2.51	664.659
24 11 23 11	4401.02.907	100 - 4	-2.'/4	768.454
24 12 23 12	439910.808	120 -6	-2.71	882.039
33 0 3 2 0	606279.403	80 28	-1.31	323."/24
3 3 1 3 2 1	606267.885	80 25	-1.32	328.684
3 3 2 3 2 2	606233.319	60 1	-1.35	343.564
33 3 3 2 3	606175.786	60 22	-1.11	368.360
33 4 3 2 4	606095.255	100 33	-1.48	403.068
33 5 3 ? , 5	605991.710	80 - 1.3	-1.68	447.677
33 6 3 2 6	605865.318	80 7	-1.40	502.180
33 7 32 7	605716.052	120 16	-1.84	566.562
33 8 3 2 8	605543.999	120 10	-2.00	640.810
33 9 3 2 9	605349.078).50 -68	-1.88	724.906
33 9 3 4 9	000077.070	<i>).50</i> -00	1.00	, 24.,000

a See text. The partition function to J=99 including the ^{14}N quadrupole multiplicity is Q_{rs} =30370.2787.

^bTots] energy of the lower state.

TABLE 4
Newly Measured CH₃C¹⁵N Transitions

Thewiy Measured			
Transition Frequency Ucert	ainty Residual		Energyb
J'' K'' J' K' (MHz) (k	Hz) (k Hz)	$\log(I_{300})$	cm- 1
		-	
1 0 0 0 17844.0556	7 - 8	-5.20	0.000
17 0 16 0 303279.456	30 4	-1.69	80.940
17 1 16 1 3032"/3.730	30 3	-1.70	85.915
17 2 16 2 303256.554	30 2	-1. "/4	100.838
17 3 16 3 303227.936	30 2	-1.50	1.25.706
18 0 17 0 321110.459	30 - 1	-1.64	91.057
18 1 17 1 321104.397	30 -3	-1.65	96.031
18 2 17 2 32104.397	30 2	-1.69	310.954
18 3 17 3 321.055.917	30 -16	-144	135.820
18 4 17 4 321013.553	30 - 30	-144	170.626
	30 -12	-1.83	215.362
18 6 17 6 320892.564		-1.76	270.019
18 7 17 7 320814.00"/	40 12	-2.22	334.585
18 8 17 8 320723.445	45 9	-2.40	409.044
18 9 17 9 320620.916	40 3	-2.30	493.381
18 10 17 10 320506.465	50 - 1	2.83	587.575
1811 17 11 320380.144	65 4	-3.09	691 .60-/
18 12 17 12 320241.988	80 2	-3.08	805.453
?,2 o 21 0 392418.271	35 -3	-1.51	124.974
22 1 21 1 392410.875	35 - 5	-1.52	129.948
22 2 21 2 392388.704	35 1	-1.56	144.868
22 3 21 3 392351.738	35 14	-1.31	169.732
24 0 2 3 0 428061.256	40 -o	-1.42	164.243
24 1 23 1. 428053.195	40 -4	-1.43	269.216
24 2 23 2 428029.033	40 1	-1.46	184.134
24 3 2 3 3 427988.762	40 - 1	-1.22	208.994
24 4 23 4 427932.413	40 3	-1.60	243.790
24 5 23 5 427859.978	50 -17	-1.70	288.514
24 6 23 6 427771.552	40 4	-1.52	343.1.56
24 7 2 3 7 427667.109	50 6	-1.97	407.704
24 8 23 8 427546.693	50 - 11	-2.13	482.142
	100 - 46	-2.02	566.455
34 1 33 1 606128.257	80 -8	-1.34	338.736
34 3 3 3 3 606037.612	60 33	-1.12	378.488
	20 -11	-1.50	413.262
34 5 33 5 605856.363	120 8	-1.59	457.958
34 6 33 6 605"/31.895	20 19	-1.41	512.565

a See text. '1' repartition function to J=99 is Q_{rs} =10431.6539. b J'otal energy Of the lower state.

TABLE 5 Comparison of Derived Constants

Constant	CH ₃ CN Value ^a (Ml Iz)	¹³ CH ₃ CN Value ^a (MHz)	CH ₃ ¹³ CN Value ^a (MHz)	CH ₃ C ¹⁵ N Value ^a (MHz)
A 1	58099.063(78) ^b	158107.7'	158093.3~	58107.7°
В	9198.899485(64)	8933.30910(43)	91 94.350598(266) 8922.03905(47)
$D_J \times 10^3$	3.807622(110)	3.62479(36)	3.810165(268)	3<55554(47)
$l)_{JK} x I O$	1.774104(45)	1.68179(48)	1.766873(206)	1.689689(286)
D_{K}	2.8318(45)b	2.8332'	2.8297 ^c	2.8332c
$H_{J} \times 10^{10}$	-2.611(147)	-2.426 ^c	-2.611 ^c	-2.356 ^c
11 _{JK} ×10 ⁷	10.2354(290)	8.64(59)	10.240(1 17)	9.688(231)
$H_{KJ} \times 10^6$	6. 104(49)	5.33(50)	6.062(144)	5,762(170)
$H_K \times 10^3$	O.156(72)b	0.156 ^c	0.156 ^c	0.156 ^c
$L_{\rm JJK} \times 10$	¹² -7.12(31)	-7.12 ^c	-7.12 ^c	-7.12°
$L_{JK} \times 10^{1}$	-5.6(14)	-5.6°	-5.6°	-5.6c
1 _{JKK} ×10	¹⁰ -5.2(10)	-5.2 ^c	-5.2 ^c	-5.2°
1.5×eQq	-6.33745(63)	-6.3329(86)	-6.3286(35)	N/A
$C_{\parallel} \times 10^{3}$	-3.08(84)	-3.08c	-3.08c	N/A
C_{\parallel} - C_{\perp} ×	$10^3 \ 2.223(125)$	2.43(151)	2.62(57)	N/A
μ ₀ Debye	e 3.92197(13) ^d	3.92197 ^c	3.92197 ^c	3.9256(7)'

a One standard deviation in units of last decimal place given. b Fixed value from Anttila et al. (1993).

c Fixed calculated value see text.

d Fixed value from Gadhi et al. (1995).

c Fixed value from Mite, Sakai, & Katayama (1984).

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